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It is surprising how this seal has lived for so long a time in such a frequently traversed part of the ocean as the Gulf of Mexico, surrounded as it is on all sides by populous cities, and yet should for nearly four hundred years remain all but unknown. Naturalists are usually particularly acute in searching out rare specimens; but by some peculiar combination of circumstances this seal has eluded the many scientific expeditions heretofore made to these waters.

For a full description of this seal the reader is referred to the previously-mentioned bulletin of Professor Allen, to whose much more able hands this work peculiarly belongs, and to whom I have willingly resigned it.

EDITORS' TABLE.

EDITORS: E. D. COPE AND J. S. KINGSLEY.

WE most heartily approve the growing practice of using English names for the various fungi, especially those which are of interest to us economically. Such fungi must be discussed over and over again in the journals of the day; they must be talked about by farmers, gardeners, stock-growers; they must be described by teachers and popular lecturers. A few of these species which are bound to have this publicity have scientific names which can be readily adopted into English speech; but in the great majority of cases the scientific names cannot be used by the people, nor can they be in any way "anglicized" or modified into such forms as will bring them into every-day use. Thus, while the genus *Bacterium* has given us the accepted term *Bacteria* for a group of organisms, the allied genus *Saccharomyces* has not been nor ever will be anglicized. Possibly *Mucor* may come into common use, but *Entomophthora* never will; nor will *Phytophthora*, *Podosphæra*, *Sphærotheca*, *Microsphæra*, *Erysiphe*, etc. It is not too much to hope that gardeners will habitually speak of the "*Ramularia*" of the strawberry, the "*Septoria*" of the plum leaf, the "*Peronospora*" of the grape-vine, but is any one rash enough to expect to hear our vineyardists speaking familiarly of the *Physalospora* ("Black Rot"), the *Cercospora* ("Grape-leaf Blight"), or the *Phyllosticta* ("Grape-leaf Spot")?

English names, or names which can be readily used by English-speaking common people, must be devised by our writers upon the injurious fungi. But in order that confusion shall not arise among and be propagated by the botanists themselves, it is all-important that English names should be chosen with the greatest care. Several years ago this matter was talked over in the Botanical Club of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and it was hoped that some good would come of it, but no report has yet been made by the committee then appointed.

Let us have, before the confusion proceeds further, a clear understanding among botanical writers as to the application of the terms Blight, Mildew, Rust, Smut, Scab, etc. Let the fungi of certain orders bear certain English names. Let us say "the Rusts" for the Uredineæ in general, and Wheat Rust, Maize Rust, Euphorbia Rust, Rush Rust, Bean Rust, etc., for the species. Let us no longer use the name "Rust" for other fungi. It is doubtful whether the use of a modifying term ought to be encouraged in the English names of groups, as, for example, the "Downy Mildews" for the Peronosporæ, and the "Powdery Mildews" for the Perisporiaceæ. This compels us to use terms like "the Powdery Mildew of the Lilac," "the Downy Mildew of the Grape," etc., forms of expression which are not likely to become common.

There is opportunity here for the exercise of considerable ingenuity among our students of the fungi. In constructing such English or anglicized names, that most excellent rule, "Avoid very long names as well as those that are difficult to articulate" (Laws Bot. Nomen., Art. 36), should be strictly observed.—*C. E. B.*

A LOUISIANA planter, according to the public press, is importing a load of rabbits from Australia, for the purpose of stocking a game-preserve with that animal. The extreme fecundity of this species (*Lepus cuniculus*) is well known, and in Australia its introduction from England has done incalculable harm to the agricultural interests. Hence the Louisiana enterprise is looked on with considerable anxiety by some persons.

The prospective injury will depend on the management of his preserves by their owner. The Australian fauna is peculiar in

the absence of carnivorous mammalia, and hence the increase of rabbits, kangaroos, etc., has little natural check excepting that of deficient food-supply. In the United States the case is far different. Here the opossum, raccoon, several species of weasels, foxes, and cats furnish an effective restriction to the increase of any form of animal life sufficiently large to attract their attention. If the keepers will permit the presence of these carnivora in the preserves there need be no fear of excessive increase of the rabbits, and quite a zoological garden might in this way be maintained.

RECENT LITERATURE.

Vines's Physiology of Plants.¹—This important work has been before the scientific public for somewhat more than half a year, and has in that time received the critical attention of most of the vegetable physiologists. It has already taken its place as an admirable cyclopædia of vegetable physiology, from which the botanical lecturer can draw *ad libitum* in the preparation of his notes. This use of the book is much favored by its form, the various topics being treated in twenty-three "Lectures." With the exception of the tables, which in some parts of the book are pretty freely used, there is little in it to remind one of the usual text-book. The style is eminently that of the lecturer before an audience, and, while it is pleasant to read, one cannot help thinking that it might have all been given in the book in much less space. There is a notable absence of any indication of the scale upon which the figures are drawn in the illustrations, an oversight which we attribute to the emphasis of the "lecture" idea in the book.

The general sequence of subjects may be understood from the headings of the successive chapters, as follows: the structure and properties of the plant-cell; absorption, the movement of water in plants; transpiration, the food of plants; metabolism, growth, irritability, reproduction. In some cases several chapters or lectures are given to each topic; thus "irritability" is discussed in seven lectures, covering 226 pages, or very nearly one-third of the book.

In a work of this kind one may demand exactness of statement and a freedom from contradictions. It is puzzling to the reader to be told on page 22, that "in some cases it is evident

¹ Lectures on the Physiology of Plants. By Sidney Howard Vines, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., Fellow and Lecturer of Christ's College, Cambridge, and Reader in Botany in the University. Cambridge, at the University Press, 1886, pp. x., 710. With 76 figures in the text.